

IN THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-12 (cancelled)

Claim 13 (currently amended): A multiple-reactor system for processing a partially fabricated semiconductor wafer having a layer of resistor material patterned to form a plurality of nichrome resistors on a surface of the wafer, comprising:

(a) a first reactor for performing an RF plasma sputter etching process on the surface of the wafer;

(b) means in the multi-reactor system for advancing the wafer from the first reactor into a second reactor while maintaining unbroken vacuum conditions in the first and second reactors;

(c) means in the second reactor for depositing a layer of metal on the surface of the wafer; and

(d) means for applying only an RF signal to the wafer to cause it to attract argon ions from the plasma to close argon planes to pinch on the surface of the wafer and remove contaminant material therefrom.

Claim 14 (original): The multiple-reactor system of claim 13 including means for passing argon gas into the first reactor with the wafer therein, and means for producing an inductively coupled plasma of argon ions in first reactor adjacent to the surface of the wafer.

Claim 15 (cancelled)

Claim 16 (previously presented): The multiple-reactor system of claim 13 including means for maintaining the wafer at approximately 400 degrees Centigrade.

Claim 17 (previously presented): The multiple-reactor system of claim 13 wherein the means for producing an argon plasma includes an inductive coil and conductors for applying power at a frequency of approximately 100 kHz to the inductive coil.

Claim 18 (original): The multiple-reactor system of claim 17 wherein the RF signal has a voltage of approximately 100 volts and a frequency of approximately 13.5 MHz.

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